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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 000592

SENSITIVE
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EUR/CARC FOR BAXTER HUNT

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KCFE](#) [RU](#) [GG](#) [EZ](#) [EUN](#)
SUBJECT: CZECHS SUPPORT GEORGIA AND TAKE TOUGH LINE ON
RUSSIA

REF: A. STATE 91894
[1](#)B. PRAGUE DAILY 26 AUGUST 2008
[1](#)C. PRAGUE 539
[1](#)D. PRAGUE 535

Classified By: POLEC Counselor Charles O. Blaha for reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

[1](#)1. Summary: The GOCR has strongly condemned Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and shares the USG perspective on support for Georgia, especially its territorial integrity. The Czechs have pressed for strong statements in the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) calling for a cease-fire and a return to the pre-August 7 status quo, condemning Russian aggression, and supporting Georgia's territorial integrity, and will do so at the EU Summit on September 1 as well. The Czechs have provided five million crowns (330,000 USD) in emergency humanitarian assistance and are committed to providing 150M crowns (10M USD) over the next three years to support Georgian reconstruction. FM Schwarzenberg has offered also to host an international donors' conference in Prague. End Summary.

Czech PM's Position Going into EU Summit

[1](#)2. (C) On August 27 the Czech cabinet agreed on its approach to the still evolving situation in Georgia. According to Czech MFA Deputy Director for Northern and Eastern Europe Martina Tauberova, the MFA is currently fleshing out Czech PM Topolanek's talking points for the September 1 EU Summit, but these points fall into five broad areas: 1) The Czechs view the latest Russian move as a clear violation of international law, and they will not support any steps that undermine the territorial integrity of Georgia; 2) The GOCR questions Russia's sincerity about upholding the six points of the cease-fire agreement while Russian troops remain in Georgia; 3) The EU cannot return to business as usual and needs to re-evaluate the EU-Russia relationship; 4) The EU should freeze the current negotiations on its Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Russia as well as discussions related to creating a visa free area between the EU and Russia; 5) The Czechs will press for a donors conference on Georgia.

Czechs Condemn Russian Recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia

[1](#)3. (C) On August 26 the Czech MFA released a statement "condemning" the recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states as "an attack on the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia." Tauberova commented that the Czechs took this step late in the day when

it became clear that the EU was having difficulty forming a consensus via EU correspondence (COREU) as to whether to "Condemn" or "Reject" Russia's action. She indicated that Italy and Spain were slightly more reticent than the rest of the EU to condemn Russian action, and hence there was no joint EU statement.

Czech Interest in Georgian Donor's Conference

¶4. (SBU) As reported in reftels b and c, the GOCR has pressed within the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the August 13 EU FMs General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) for a Georgia Donor's Conference. Tauberova told Embassy POLEC officer on August 27 that so far the response from EU member states has been "moderate." While the Czechs are willing to host such an event here in Prague, they recognize that other European countries may also be interested in hosting. The Czechs are flexible on location, timing, and pledging mechanisms, although they emphasize that the European Commission should play a coordinating role and that this must be an international conference with U.S. participation. As noted above, PM Topolanek will raise this at the EU Summit on Georgia as well.

Concerns about Russian Intentions

¶5. (SBU) During an August 25 meeting, Czech MFA Political Director Martin Povejsil told Embassy officials that Russian recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia clearly show that Russia does not want to resolve "frozen conflicts" in the

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former Soviet Union. Povejsil expressed concern that Russia's stance in Georgia could be a harbinger of negative stances and actions in other former Soviet republics such as Ukraine and Moldova.

¶6. (C) Comment: Some analysts and foreign ministry officials believe the Russian actions in Georgia may also bolster the case for missile defense in the Czech Republic. While we do not expect to see a change in public opinion, Russia's actions may give a few wavering members of parliament another reason to vote for the radar agreements. End Comment.
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